

# JOURNAL OF JOHN MAIR

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2. *Journal of John Mair, 1791*

JOHN MAIR, Esquire, of Iron Acton, father of Mary Charlotte, wife of Nassau W. Senior, was born in 1744. His friends bought him a commission as cornet of dragoons and he immediately sailed for India in 1761. After much active service he retired from the army and sailed from India in the same ship with Lord Clive in 1767. Elaborate journals of his stay in India and subsequent travels are in the possession of his granddaughter. He visited Paris on his way home, and lived there with John Wilkes and his daughter. In 1770 he again visited Paris to be present at the marriage of Louis XVI. to Marie Antoinette, whom he ardently admired. He was an inveterate traveller, visiting all parts of England and the Continent, the United States, Canada, and the West Indies, where he was so much charmed with Dominica that he bought an estate and lived there several years. During the short time he lived in England he spent the winters at Bath. In his old age he bought the little estate of Iron Acton in Gloucestershire and took his son and two daughters to live with him. John Raven Senior was then parson of the parish, hence the marriage of Nassau Senior and Mary Mair. Mr. Mair died in London at his son-in-law's house, 13 Hyde Park, in 1830, of fatigue brought on by a hasty visit to Paris to see the results of the Revolution of 1830. His journals, in the possession of Mrs. M. Simpson, of Milmead House, Guildford, Sur-

rey, daughter of Nassau W. Senior, fill seven volumes of 150 to 175 pages each. We are also indebted to Mrs. Simpson for the notes used in preparing the preceding sketch. The narrative of American travel, while nowise profound, is interesting as recording the observations of an intelligent and remarkably experienced traveller. The editor's attention was first called to it by Mr. James Bain, chief librarian of the Toronto Public Library. A division into paragraphs has been carried through in order to aid the reader; there are none in the original manuscript. An extract from Mair's Journals descriptive of the marriage of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine*, September, 1899.

The 3d. Janry 1791 I embark'd at night on board the Betsey, Capn. Flagg, a brig belonging to Portsmouth in America but bound for Charles-Town South Carolina. we attempted getting out at gun fire next morning by the aid of the land winds which blow at night and till 9 oClock in the morng. but the sea breeze setting in very early we were forc'd to come to an Anchor again, and wait till next morning when we effected it but made little progress that day. we were forc'd to lay to 3 different times to avoid the Keys call'd the West Caicoss, Mayaguana, and Atwoods which are Islands extremely flat, uninhabited, and are mostly sand bearing nothing but low shrubs. the 11th. day we were on the edge of Soundings when a very strong Southwester came on which oblig'd us to lay to. it continu'd 36 hours and when it clear'd up we found ourselves carry'd greatly to the Northward by the Currt. which was so strong that whilst we were beating with a foul wind our head W S: W. we were carry'd 69 Miles North in the 24 hours; we had got off Cape Hatteras, when a severe N: W: gave us the Southing we had lost, and we once more got into our latitude. we had however calms and such baffling weather that we did not get in till the 29th.

the land is so very low that you see the trees long before it. the lighthouse is here very necessary otherwise many vessels wou'd get on the bar. there is no fort of consequence (Sullivans being now destroy'd) going up to Charles town but occasionally the passage might be made very strong. the Town looks much better from the Sea, than it is found to be on entring it, for the streets being unpav'd the sand makes it very heavy walking. the houses are very irregular, and mostly but badly built, tho' there are some that are very handsome. the Town-house and the Exchange are good regular buildings, as are the 2 parish churches; had those fronting the warfs been regular and well built it might have vied with the Charteron of Bordeau; there are also several very obnoxious swamps not only about the shore, but in the very middle of the Town, yet houses let prodigious dear, I saw one on the beach of only 2 Rooms on a floor, that sometime since let for 300£ Ster: pr. An: the warfs are very commodious, and belong to individuals, but its a pity they were not made uniform; the shipping here surpris'd

me with their number amounting to upwards of 200 sail, and most of these large ships or Brigs; the old Fortifications are destroy'd. its natural situation is very strong, being flank'd by two rivers (Cooper and Ashley) and the lines across the main land cou'd soon be made very strong; the Market for meat etc is pretty good, but very dear, indeed every Article is to the full as dear as in the West Indies, and the profits must be very great to afford the Expence, yet it wou'd seem by the complaints I heard that money is very scarce, and the produce of the rice plantations are by no means in general adequate to the expenditures in forming them. one reason indeed of the houses in town letting so high, is, that every planter that can afford it, has a residence, there, for the heat of summer (which is infinitely greater than in the W: I: it having remain'd 4 days last summer at 104 degrees) is so dangerous to the health, that they then come to town; the climate however from Novr. to April is generally mild; when the wind call'd the Hobeaw (N: W:) blows it is sometimes piercing cold. I also felt some days when it was at South East as unseasonably warm. the dust in the streets is unsufferable, one inhales enough when the weather is dry and the wind high to choak one.

the inhabitants are much divided and I think from the Interest some families maintain, and the suppleness of the Merchants and Tradesmen that they verge very much towards an Aristocriey: when alone people live very frugally, when they entertain, it is allways to a crou'd and then they cram their Tables with solids of an enormous size. they drink little else but Madeira. they have no regular Assembly, we strangers gave one Ball, the Freemasons another and in the Race week which was the 2d. March, at which all the contiguous planters flock'd, the Jockey club gave another. the Assembly room is infinitely too small, and the Musick and supper-rooms wretched beyond Idea. they have Concerts once in 14 days tho' they are but indifferent. the Sex here are very handsome, tho' in general they want colour. most of them have been educated in Europe, but quitted it too early to have form'd their Manners to the stile there.

they have lately establish'd the meeting of the Legislature at Columbia, as a place more central than Charlestown, and the Govt. was this year new model'd, and a new code of laws made which according to appearance are fully equal to exigencies. they have inumerable Lawyers, but what pleadings I heard did not give me a high Idea of their Orators, and their Courts are totally void not only of majesty but even want decency. I heard the tryal of a Man (who had serv'd as a Major in the Wars, and had took the name of Washington) for forging indents. they were very delicate in their proceedings, but on the most glaring proofs he was condemn'd and executed.

the country contiguous, is all a sand, and but little clear'd, being mostly what they call Pine Barens. the Rice swamps begin 10 or 12 Miles distance, and are either on the rivers which are embank'd to keep

out the tides, or inland in low swampy places. some of those have running streams, which may be turnd into the swamps when the rice or the fertilising the ground requires it, for instead of dung, they lay their fallows under water for 2 or 3 years; I went to see some plantations nearest the town but the most perfect are those on the Santee river or near George town. The back country is cultivated in Tobacco, but the distance they are oblig'd to send it by land must barely give a living to the planter. they put a shaft through the hhd and rowl it down with 2 Horses, and tho' it is drag'd through swamps and pools of water it is so hard pack'd as not to be damag'd. I am told the country beyond the Hills is a fine climate and soil. it is inhabited by Refugees from Virginia, whose manners are more savage than the Indians, but they are a strong hardy race, and I make no doubt in time will become respectable to their Neighbours.

I saild from Charles Town the 24th. March in the brig Hetty Clouser bound for Philadelphia. my original intention was to go to Norfolk in Virginia, and thence by land to that City, and to have call'd in my way on Genl. Washington at Mt. Vernon, but I learnt that he was on his way to Carolina, therefore I chang'd my rout. we sailed with a very fair wind for 2 days when it became quite contrary and we had very bad stormy weather, and it was 10 days before we made the Capes of the Delaware. the land thereabouts is as flat very near as at Carolina, the river is very wide till within 60 Miles of the Town, when it narrows considerably. it is counted 150 or 160 Miles from the Capes to the Town. the Jersey shore seems but little cultivated, the other side has several small Towns which look very pleasant. the tide is very rapid, and in two days more making in all 12 days from Charles town, we got up to the wharf the 4th. April.

one does not see the city on acct. of the short turnings of the different reaches till within a league of it. it's appearance is not so striking as Charles town, but when landed the streets exhibit great neatness and regularity, and the houses are well built and all of brick. the streets are pav'd, but are at present in a very bad condition; Market Street is the broadest but the lower part of it is spoild by the stalls for provisions, the exhibition of which is very fine, and their beef rivals Leaden hall. fish is not quite so plentiful, and is mostly of one sort. the streets are lay'd out parallel with the wharfs, and are nam'd Front, Second etc, the cross streets amongst which is the Market Street, have various names. the town is very extensive, and houses let at a very high price especially since the Congress have fix'd themselves here. lots of land for building are at an enormous price. at the back of the town is a very large tract of land all mark'd out as far [as] the Schuylkill for buildings, and they are soon to build a Square, in which is to be the Presidents house, and all the Federal offices. the Government buildings belonging to the state are uniform, and neat and have a good walk behind them. the Court house is small, nor do they use more

Ceremony at the Tryals than in Charles town may not so much for they wear no Gowns; They have a poor house where Idlers are put that beg in the streets, and are made to do something for their maintainance. their Hospital is on a very good footing and very clean. the Lunaticks are also taken care of here.

I expected to have found greater simplicity of manners and dress than I did, but now the Quakers alone seem to retain it. all the other inhabitants are as gay and dissipated as in London, and the abode of the Congress has introduce'd all kinds of luxury, they have plays, balls, Concerts etc, and the Routs at different houses vie with St. James's.

commerce here seems to thrive very much, and the new establish'd funds have given prodigious fortunes to some individuals. the wharfs for the shipping are very convenient but they have spoild the original design of leaving a considerable area between the Front Street, and them, by building an intermediate street call'd Water Street; the Churches for the protestants and different religious sects are numerous, the Quakers have 5, they are all neat.

the president when he is here resides in a house rented of Mr. Morrice the Financier, he observes great simplicity of manner, but whether from disposition of [or] policy associates but very little with any one. he never accepts an invitation to dine out, but his Secrety. invites strangers very often to dine with the prest. and he has a levé day, and his wife an Evening but witht. cards. whilst I was here I met all the remarkable characters at the feast of St. Geo: which is regularly kept up; I think their state of society will bear improvement, which their converse with strangers will soon effect.

every day I was here I rode out nor can there be more beautifull rides than in the environs. the banks of the Delawar, and the opposite shore of the Jerseys are very picturesque but the Schulekill is enchantingly romantick, the hills coming down in a slope sometimes gentle sometimes steep to the side of the river. both of these Rivers are ornamented with beautifull Country Seats, full of fruit etc etc. at present land is rather in a state of depreciation, and one of these houses with a consble farm contiguous may be purchas'd very cheap, for commerce, and the state Securities engrosses every speculation. they have here an ugly weed that does much mischief, and can't be rooted out call'd Garlick. the Milk and even the meat tastes of it.

the inland country between the Rivers is beautifull, but the British have rob'd it of its trees. these rivers in time will probably be joind, and if that, and the cuts design'd for the upper inland Navigation succeed, this city bids fair to retain its Metropolitan dignity, and to be in future Notwithstandg the town recently mark'd out on the Potowmack the Seat of the Federal Govt. the roads are of that sort of earth that require either the assistance of gravel or paving to make them good. they are lay'd out very broad, but are dreadfull in winter, and disagreeably dusty in summer. the Waggons that supply the city with corn are

continually passing, bringing it from the contiguous Towns of which there are a great number. the Schulkill has 3 bridges lay'd on large logs of wood over it. at the town of Greys is a pritty Garden which in summer is lighted up to serve as a Vauxhall; there is also another Garden of the same nature 4 Miles on the Frankfurt road call'd Harrowgate from the similitude its waters have to those of the same name in England.

having seen as much of the country contiguous as circumstances wou'd permit, and finding that my plan of passing to New York by Bethleham cou'd not be effected without my staying till May when those stages then begin to run, I embark'd the 27th. April on board a boat to Burdlington which lys 30 Miles up the Delawar. nothing can be more delightfull than this voyage for the Banks on each side are decorated with small Towns or country houses. this conveyance however has its inconvenience as I fatally experienc'd, for the wind which was fair at setting off changing, and the tide changing agt. us we were forc'd to come to, and did not arrive at our destination till next morning; from hence we set out in a stage for Amboy, the road rather rough, the country rich and pritty well settled. Amboy is 40 Miles from Burdington and is only a single house which is an Inn, we arriv'd here at 2 oClock, and immediately embark'd on board the packet. having a fair wind, our Voyage was delightfull the coasts of Staten Island, the Jerseys, and long Island affording a most delightfull scene also a distant view of the hook, but after we had got through the narrows, it fell suddenly calm, and the tide about sun-setting changing, we were forc'd to Anchor within 6 Miles of the Town, and pass'd a very cold and uncomfortable night on board. in the morning of the 29th. we again got under way but it being quite calm we did not get to the Quay before 10 oClock by which delay however I had an opportunity of contemplating the beautifull prospects that surrounded us. the distance of Amboy to new York is 30 Miles, and is generally run in one tide.

nothing can be more beautifull to the eye or advantageous for commerce than the Situation of New York. it is in a corner of the Island, form'd by the North or Hudsons river, and the Channel or East River. the Quays are mostly (for ships) on the East river, and from the Battery where is the Govt. house (a massive but not an elegant building) and where they are making a beautifull parade, is as fine a view as the eye can wish; the town has some very good houses in it. the Hall, the Churches, and Hospitals are all good or handsome buildings. the Streets are irregular and some of them very narrow, but the pavement at present is very good; commerce here is very advantageous, and most people are at their ease, some indeed rich. they deservedly have the character of being hospitable, to strangers, and I think in general are more easy than any of the other States. young people marry here very early, and either old Maids or Bachelors are rare.

as they have an easy communication by the North river to the in-

terior parts of the country they employ a prodigious number of craft for that purpose, and as this port seldom or ever freezes they boast of that advantage over Philadelphia where ships are frequently detain'd by the Ice. New York Island is joind to the Main by a bridge 15 Miles from town. the Island is very narrow, the land poor, the roads are not so varied as Philadelphia, but the rides are beautifull. there are several rising grounds from which one commands a view of both rivers, particularly at Fort Washington 11 Miles from town; the Ferry to Long Island is short, and the country and roads are there beautifull and extensive. the Ferrys to the Jersies are 3, to arrive at Newark 7 Miles, which makes excursions there very inconvenient. I rode one day to see the falls of the Pisaick river 25 Miles. the fall in itself fell greatly short of my expectation, but as I made a circle by the town of Hackinsack and the road for the most part going by the side of those two rivers nothing can be more picturesque than the country, it is so thickly setled with small farms that it appears as one continual village, and really might be compared in beauty to the Thames, except that it wants the embellishments of buildings and Gardens. The Markets of new York are little inferior to Philadelphia, that of the Fish better. people live very well here, and cheap. in the winter they have balls, routs, and all kinds of amusements, but the moment the summer approaches all finishes, but tea parties.

the 22d. May I embark'd on board the Providence packet for Newport in Rhode Island, where we arriv'd the next day after a sail of 26 hours. the prospect on each side the Channel of Long Island and Connecticut Shores was as delightfull as a well setled, and beautifully variegated country cou'd render it.

the Town of Newport bears the traces of having once been eminent, but many of the inhabitants being ruin'd in the war by their attachment to the Royal cause, several houses are empty, and their Trade has quite dwindled away, tho the Harbour is allow'd to be the best in the States, and it offers every advantage a commercial people cou'd wish; some of the buildings have been good and handsome, but must now soon decay. I took a ride round the Island which is about 15 Miles long, but is very narrow. the road is very good, and the country beautifull, and must have been eminently so, before the British troops devasted it of its trees. the fences are mostly stone. the land is mostly gently rising and falling. it is in general good, and was very well cultivated. the channel to the continent is not above  $\frac{1}{2}$  a Mile and the prospects from the rising grounds are very extensive on each side; we found a French Ship of War of 74 Guns, anchor'd here, call'd the Duguay Trouin. she call'd in here for supplys on her way to Europe from Martinico having a vast number of land troops on board.

at 12 oClock next day we again set sail, and having a fine wind got to Providence by 5 oClock in the afternoon, there is an assemblage of so

many beautifull prospects in this passage, particularly when going up the river that it wou'd be difficult to do justice to them. the channel has several well cultivated Islands, and tho when arriv'd in the river the Banks are very steep and high, the rapid rise of the lands contiguous presents a very picturesque view on every side, which is bounded (on rounding the point) by the town, which lays under the hills. it is well built, and as it owes its rise to the fall of Newport every thing looks fresh and wears an air of business. it is as large as Newport and has several good buildings, but like that mostly of wood, the river divides the town, but is connected by a bridge; I observ'd both here and at Newport that they are very curious in the spires of the churches. on an eminence (where there has been a fortification) above the town is a most extensive and beautifull prospect of the whole of the town, the sea, the Islands, and circumjacent lands on the continent.

we went from hence about 8 oClock the next morning, in the stage, and got to Boston at 6 oClock in the afternoon. stopping half way to dine. the distance is 45 Miles, the road pretty good, and the country finely varied. there were several Villages we pass'd through and some beautifull farms ornamented with fine fruit trees, and having plenty of trout Streams; most of this country is in pasture, tho' they have some Arable land; there are several handsome country seats just before one comes to Roxburgh which is only a Mile from the Neck.

Boston is not so big as new York, and where it not for the causeway or Neck wou'd be an Island. it is mostly built on the ground contiguous to the Harbour, so that it extends very long. behind are several hills on one of which is a Column bearing a very proper Inscription. from hence is a complete view of the Town, and circumjacent country; there is a Mill pond which covers a considerable space of ground and which being easily drain'd wou'd afford Room for a fine square or other buildings. the Streets are pritty good, tho the pavement wants mending, and the foot way broad stones, those it at present is pav'd with being very rough and pointed. most of the houses are of wood, but some of them are very neat. as yet they have no lamps which is very inconvenient for the nightwalkers. the Churches and Meetings are all very handsome, and that intolerance which they were once so famous for is now no more and I was present at the social meetings, of the Catholick, the Protestant Bishops and Divines. the Clergy are very numerous. I was told 150 were invited to the publick dinner the Govr.<sup>1</sup> gave on the day of his being again rechosen into the Government. the Quays are very convenient, and distributed all along the Harbour. the long Quay is handsome, and is the property of several individuals. they have begun several manufactoryes. that for Sail Duck is counted a valuable acquisition to the state, it employing a number of females on a very liberal footing; and furnishing that article in greater perfection than they cou'd import it. they are encouraging for that pur-

<sup>1</sup> Hancock.

pose the cultivation of hemp and expect from every appearance great success. the circumjacent country is beautifull, being mostly pasture ground, for as yet they do not grow corn in common, importing most of their flower from Philadelphia. None of their publick buildings are much worth noticing. their Market both for fish and flesh is pritty abundant but wants the neatness of the other cities.

I made frequent excursions on Horseback, to the contiguous towns and villiages. from the Church at Dorchester<sup>1</sup> there is a charming view of a fine country the Harbour which is render'd more beautifull by its being replete with small Islands, and the town. the road leading to Cambridge over the Neck and returning by Charles town is very pritty. the Colledge is a good building, and on a good foundation. there is a small river navigable for sloops up to it. it is about 4 Miles from Boston. I frequently went to see Bunkers hill which is contiguous to Charles town which during the war was burn'd down, nor has it since recover'd its former size or splendour.

the Inhabitants in general are very hospitable, but do not give much into the pleasures of the table dining early and doing as much business after as before dinner, nor do the ladies come much into company. some of them are very pritty, but want the polish of language, and the easy and elgant manner polite education gives.

the 8th. of June I took leave of Boston and went in the stage to Hartford. this is the only mode of conveyance in the united states, and is bad enough especially when crowded, for their numbers are not stinted and both there and at their Inns people are bundled together like sheep going to Market; the country we pass'd through is beautifully varied well waterd and has several small lakes or ponds, in general hilly. the road tolerable and capable of being made very excellent, replete with towns and villiages in short a very thick settled country for the first 60 Miles, after which the soil being bad (a loose sand) there is much wood left standing, and the settlements but thin, till near Springfield on the river of Connectacut, where the Stage is ferry'd over, from thence to Hartford (the Capital of Connecticut) the country is very rich, and mostly a plain, so that the Towns and villiages allmost extend to one another. Suffield, and Windsor are both handsome towns, and are inhabited by Gentn. retir'd on their Ests.

Hartford is a pritty extensive town, the streets very long, but not pav'd, some of the houses are neat enough but all are built of wood. it stands on the Connectacut river and has a small river running through the town into it, it ships horses, cattle etc for the W: I: and a quantity of hay of the Southward. they also breed a number of Mules in this country a branch of commerce which is dayly encreasing. from the Balcony of the church Steeple one has a charming view of the circumjacent country, than which nothing can be more rich and beautifull. we hir'd a carriage from hence next day, and went to see Middletown.

<sup>1</sup> Meetinghouse Hill.

about 4 Miles before one gets there is an eminence which commands the most delightfull country I ever saw, really it appear'd not inferior to the vale of Evesham and the river simular to the Severne; the town seems pritty large tho' stragling. it is 15 Miles from Hartford. on our way home we mounted the hights of Rockey hill a small Town 7 Miles from Hartford, where we again were gratifyd with a beautifull view. Weathersfield is 4 Miles from Hartford and is a pritty large and well built town.

having amply gratify'd our curiossity in this fine country. we with some difficulty got a Waggon (cover'd) to carry us across the country to Albany, and on Sunday the 12th. (having obtain'd a written permission from the Mayor on account of the day) we set off. the country was pritty well cultivated to Farmington (12 Miles) where we got to breakfast, the road good; a very fine river serpentines through these plains, and joins the Connecticut river at Windsor. from hence the road became worse and the country hilly and little setled. we din'd at New Hartford 12 Miles a small villiage; a Mile from hence the green woods began. the road now became horrid and scarcely passable for a carriage. we mounted several very steep hills, and the rocks and stones made it difficult to proceed; now and then we met a small settlement in its infancy, but from the general aspect of the country. I shou'd judge when it is once very well setled that it will be very beautifull. the air as it lys high is purer and cooler than the plains; we lay'd at a small villiage call'd Colebrooke 12 Miles and really our quarters were much better than I expected. they told us here that even now they sometimes saw Panthers in the woods, and wild cats, besides deer and other game; early next morning we proceeded and at the end of 4 Miles found a small villiage call'd Norfolk which is counted out of the hilly wood land. we breakfasted at Canaan a small town 4 Miles prittily situated. the country now appear'd better setled. hence we went through Shiffield<sup>1</sup> a small town to Great Barrington where we din'd, 14 Miles, the road good, the country hilly but pritty well setled. this is a small town its situation fine being in a valley where a river runs through. we lay'd at a small villiage call'd Stockbridge 13 Miles near where are some Iron works. next Morning we breakfasted at New Lebanon<sup>2</sup> 14 Miles, passing through Richmond 3 Miles a handsome town and prittily situated; the road good, and country well cultivated.

Lebanon is very extensive. in its district or Parish which extends 10 or 12 Miles as is the case with most of the towns in this new country are several Establishments one in particular very singular call'd the Shaking quakers street. these people being of both Sexes live in a state of celibacy. even those marry'd before on coming here are separated. they are very industrious have cleard a great deal of land and have got good buildings. on Sunday they pray, and what is unaccount-

<sup>1</sup> Passing now from Connecticut into Massachusetts.

<sup>2</sup> In New York.

ably singular dance to different tunes with such vehemance that the Men frequently are obld. to throw off all their clothes but what decency requires to remain. they are in great subordination to their elders who directs the dance and prayers and regulates the whole Economy of the society. a prostitute who follow'd the English Camp is said to be the foundress.<sup>1</sup> it seems too absurd and too prejudicial to a rising population to last. they say when question'd, that dancing serves by its violent exercise to subdue their passions to venery, but I have allways been inclin'd to think the reverse the fact. the spring of Lebanon was once more frequented than at present. it is a very weak water, and barely the chill taken off. its situation is beautifull, on a hill which commands the circumjacent country, which is well setled, and has several different villiages in the valley below; we found some invalids here and there are 4 or 5 good houses to accomodate lodgers.

at 12 o'Clock we continued our rout, and din'd at Stevens town 9 Miles, a small villiage. the country hilly, pretty well setled, and a fine stream running through the valley which empties itself into the North river at Kinderhook. we Slept at Phillips town a small villiage 7 Miles, and next Morning got to Albany 14 Miles, crossing the north river directly opposite the town; a great part of the last 21 Miles is but little setled, the road good, the country hilly, the whole distance from Hartford to Albany 115 Miles. the mountains of the green wood which I am told extend up to Canada seem a division design'd by nature between the North and Connecticut rivers.

Albany is situated on the North river at the foot of hills, which tho it shelters it from the cold in winter makes it exceeding hot in summer. the town is pritty large and has some good buildings in it. the streets are wide, the inhabitants are a mixture of Dutch and English, but the Dutch manners are disagreeably predominant. the circumjacent country is beautifull, a fine view of which is had from the hills at the back of the town. it is inconceivable what a great trade is carry'd on between this place and York for Grain lumber etc. I counted myself 30 sloops and Schooners at anchor, and am told there frequently is a hundred. the river here is about as broad as at London bridge, but it is navagable for sloops no higher. Mr Van Rhenselleir is possess'd of lands stretching 24 by 20 Miles, but the spot where the town of Albany stands tho' in the middle of his lands has its own rights etc.

I rode from hence one day to the falls of the Cohouse.<sup>2</sup> it is about nine Miles from Town the road along the North river till arriv'd at one of the branches of the Mohawk. it is three Miles up that river, the width there is broader than the Rhine, but it is not so high, nor near so much water except when there has been a great fall of rain or the snow melting. it then not only fills its bed but over flows the road and contiguous fields, and must certainly be a most magnificent sight. the fall is very little broken so that the sheet wou'd then be perfect.

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to Mother Ann Lee.

<sup>2</sup> Cohoes.

the 18th. I began my rout for Fort Geo: in a Waggon. we set off at noon, and got that night to Saratoga about 2 Miles from the creek where General Burgoyne was encamp'd when he surrenderd and Genl. Schuyler had a house. it is 38 Miles from Albany. we pass'd Troys a small town 6 Miles [from] Albany, and Lansinberg or the New City (rather larger than the first) 9 Miles from Albany. Water town<sup>1</sup> is on the West side the North River, which at Troys begins to be very shallow and continues with only some intervals of deep water for 15 Miles so, when the still water begins which is deep enough. in time probably channels will be dug through these rapids to admit the passing of sloops, nor wou'd such a cut be attended with much expense. the road is all the way by the river side, (we ferry'd over it twice) is very good and the country well setled and pleasant, but on account of the highths on each side the river the view both E: and W: is confin'd. I remark'd the 4 mouths of the Mohawk river on the northermost of which is Water town, I had some thoughts once of going to Schenectadé a town laying on the banks of the Mohawk about 8 Miles from the mouth, and thence to see the Springs of Satarago which by the accounts I had of them must be waters of great efficacy, but dreaded the roads and accomodations.

the next day (Sunday) being very rainy I did not stirr out. Monday 20th. about 11 oClock noon we arriv'd at Fort or Lake Geo: the road good and by the river side till 3 Miles past Fort Edward where we breakfasted. this is a small Town and the country mostly setled.  $\frac{1}{2}$  a Mile where the road turns off from the river is a pritty water fall call'd Wings fall. the platform of a solid rock over which the river runs, has a trough or canal worn into it through which the river when it is not expanded by a great quantity of water to cover over its whole bed rushes very impetuosity. the fall which is a few feet higher up, is not high, but looks altogether very romantick. the country from hence is but poor and little setled, and the road within the 4 last Miles is very stoney; the lake furnishes a beautifull view. it is near  $\frac{1}{2}$  a Mile broad, surrounded by hills all cloath'd in wood, and full of Islands. the 2 Forts of Edward, and Wm. Henry are both destroy'd. the lands contiguous to the lake are but poor, in consequence there is but little of it cultivated.

next day very early I embark'd in a two oard boat, and about 2 oClock having mostly a fair wind arriv'd on the other side, or North. it is a very pleasant trip. one is amus'd by the view of the lake which is full of little Islands, tho' the surrounding hills which rise pritty steep from the edge of the lake are still in woods. except 2 or 3 small spots. when this lake is intirely cleared, it will become more beautifull. it is full of fine fish, and generally furnishes plenty to the passers. its length is 36 Miles, extreme breadth 2 Miles. I got with some difficulty a cart to carry my baggage over to Tycondaroga, and walk'd there my-

<sup>1</sup> Waterford is no dou't meant.

self. it is about three Miles, half way is a bridge over the outlet of Lake George which communicates with lake Champlain. it is here are the falls which are considerable, I think as high as the Cohouse but not so broad, nor did then the water expand to cover them. there is a fine saw and grist Mill below the fall. the country is here somewhat more clear'd and exhibits a fine appearance. the old French lines and Forts on Tycondaroga are in ruins. the surrounding plains are beautifull, and are now mostly in pasture, but have few inhabitants. I think the view from the flat eminence where the forts stood is a remarkable beautifull and must have been a healthy spot. it is a kind of tongue jutting into the lake and commands the pass, and on the opposite side of the lake is Forts Independance and Defiance in the state of Vermont. this communication of the lake is 20 Miles to the North of the head of lake Champlain where there is a small town call'd Skanesborough.

I found that I had done wrong in coming here. I should have gone to that place which is only 14 Miles more of land carriage, and promises a much more certain passage, for I had to depend here on the boats passing loaded from thence, and sometimes they go by in the night witht. calling in. I was forc'd to stay here 2 days before I cou'd find an opporty. the 23rd. at 3 oClock I embark'd in a row boat to go down the lake, and the wind being fair we made before night 30 Miles. the breadth of the lake dont appear thus far to be above 1½ Miles. the surrounding hills do not raise so rapidly as those [around] lake Geo: but leaving in general a plain next the side, and every 1 or 2 Miles is a settlement, or villiage. Crown point is on the East side, and commands a narrow pass. the ruins announce it to have been considerable. it is on a fine plain, but I shou'd think the hills at the back must have allways commanded it.

next morning early I continued my rout. the country and lake the same as the preceeding day for 20 Miles (in which distance we pass'd the river of New haven where 6 Miles up are very fine falls, on which river are Iron forges, Grist and Saw Mills) when the lake becomes much wider and encreases 'till it is 23 Miles over, in an eastern bay of which lays Burlington a small town. Grand Isle begins here which runs as the lake for 24 Miles, and 3 Miles broad, then is La Mot's Isle, the lake again gradually decreasing, and about La Motts Isle the land seems low and swampy. the first british post is at Dutchmans point where is a Corporals guard. the second is at Point au fer where is a Capns. Guard, and an Arm'd Schooner; the next post is at Isle aux Noix where is also a Capns. Guard. this Isle is very small; there are very few settlers after passing the first post, from whence the country seems a perfect swamp, swarming with flies and Muskatoes and having very few settlements till arriv'd at St John's where we did not get till the 25th. at 3 oClock in the afternoon.

the Lake from Isle aux noix is very narrow not ½ a Mile broad, and it seems a miserable swamp, and only 3 log houses in 15 Miles. indeed

most of the houses on this lake are built in the same manner, and the entertainment and lodging is most execrably bad, nor do I think it is much better at St. John's; the Barracks within the Fort, and the houses witht. belonging to private people, being mostly in the same stile, the whole as well as the ramparts and other parts of the fortification being much out of repair. the plain it is situated on is somewhat elevated, and has been cleard to considerable distance to render it wholesome. the soil seems good furnishing a good natural pasture, and is no doubt capable of improvement. a 20 Gun Ship, and the Hulls of several lesser are laying opposite the town, where a short space more will turn them into rotten dust. the Garn. [Garrison] consists of 6 Compys. commanded by a Lieutt. Col: just without the fort is a rising ground where they bury the dead, which is much higher than where the fort stands. the Americans attack'd it from hence for it intirely commands it, and it seems this ground has been mostly clear'd since the last War.

the 26th. after breakfast I sent forward my baggage by a Cart, and myself mounted a horse, and rode all the way by the side of the river St. Johns to Chamblie. this whole road appears (12 Miles) as one continued villiage. most of the land which is clear'd is in pasture tho' I saw some wheat that appear'd pritty thriving. the opposite side of the river is also somewhat setled; the Fort here is a square, and now serves as barracks for a company that is quarterd here. it has no ditch, and cou'd make no defence agt. cannon. the Town is stragling, but pritty extensive and has some good houses in it. the view from the fort is beautifully picturesque. the river from St. Johns to here is full of rapids, but from hence to Sorel where it joins the St. Laurence, it is navagable.

after dining at the Fort at 3 oClock, I continued my rout mostly, by the side of the small river Chamblie which is exceedingly crooked and muddy, to Longueville; the country is all clear'd except a breadth of about 3 Miles, which I am told runs in a line till it joins the woods of St. John's. the land is so flat that it is very subject to be cover'd by the rains but from the luxuriency of the pastures I shou'd judge the soil to be very rich, the houses of the Farmers are mostly log, and are much inferior in neatness to those of the states. the roads this way which is directly across the country that separates the 2 rivers, are exceedingly bad, and it was late before I arriv'd tho' the distance is call'd only 15 Miles. Longueville is a very extensive tho' very stragling town. the best houses and thickest together are on the banks of the river near the Church. here is also a small Fort but not garrison'd.

when I gain'd the river St. Laurence which I did 2 Miles above the ferry the view of Montreal and the mountain behind it look'd very beautifull but the river here is too shallow and rapid to admit a passage across, and it being late I slept at the Ferry. there is another rout to go to Montreal by La Praire 18 Miles from St. John's, and taking boat from thence down the river to Montreal which is 10 Miles below it, but as

it is sometimes uncertain I prefer'd the other way. the French language is the only one the peasants know, and they have retain'd also their manners, and the old French dress of a close Cassock and sash. next morning I cross'd. the river is extremely rapid but as the wind was fair I got over in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  an hour. a small Island lys midway on which a Capn. Grant lives who has a Mill there and has made it a beautifull spot.

Montreal is long but very narrow having but two principal streets which run the length of the town, the houses are mostly stone, low and in the French stile. some of the Churches are handsome. the streets are pav'd but are narrow. it is wall'd round and has ramparts but they are gone to decay, and the ditch is near fill'd up; there is a hill<sup>1</sup> just behind the town that intirely comids. it, and from the top of this hill I had a most beautifull and extensive view of the country, which is mostly a plaine and seems pritty well cultivated. nothing can be grander than the flowing through it of the river St. Laurance, which about 6 or 7 Miles above the town begins to be too rockey and rapid to be navigable but for flat bottom'd boats. they have at some expence render'd easy its communication with the Lakes: and no doubt time will greatly improve it, as the country is settled very much allready, and is dayly encreasing: the largest ships mount up to the Town with safety, and unload and load here; and their export in Wheat and Flower is prodigious. most of the farms in this neighborhood are inhabited by Canadians, who are averse to improvement, and seem but a lazey set of people, and very superstitious.

I stay'd here 2 days and on the 29th. (there is a Regt. lays here) embark'd on board a very small Schooner for Quebec. we got down as low as Sorel by night and anchor'd 15 Leagues. the country on both sides beautifull, and well cultivated and seemd one intire villiage. the next day it was very calm but by the current we with some difficulty got through the Lake which is a very broad part of the river St. Laurance, full of little Islands and on that account difficult of navigation. the Islands are full of wood, and are swampy which makes them swarm with Muskatoes, but on the main shore the Settlements are pritty thick. this lake continues 7 Leagues when the river becomes narrower. we next pass'd Trois Rivieres a pritty little town 3 Leagues below the lake, and continuing our rout made this day 25 Leagues when at night we anchor'd near a dangerous shoal. the country began after passing the lake to be less flat, the settlements the same, the Parishes being established at 2 Leagues each in extent; next morning we pass'd the abovemention'd shoal and also another still more dangerous 6 Leagues below it call'd the Rapids. here the country is beautifully picturesque, the houses built handsomer and more numerous.

about 2 oClock in the afternoon, the wind chang'd and blew fresh agt. us, at the same time also the tide chang'd (which flows up as high as the Rapids) so that we were necessitated to anchor about 3 Leagues

<sup>1</sup> Mount Royal.

above Quebec the whole distance 60 Leagues and as I found myself very much fatigued with my bad lodging, I got the Capn. to land me at the last post, and went to Quebec in a Calash, which I had reason to rejoice at as by that means I had an opportunity of seeing from the road which is on a Terrace the beautifull and thick setled plain which extends from a river I pass'd near the Post house, to the City of Quebec. the Post for travellers was establish'd by the French, it is a Calash with one Horse, which can occasionally carry two persons and pays 12d. pr. League. it goes all the way from Montreal but is very fatiguing, and the Inns on the road very bad, nor does one see so much of the country that way as by water as the road is by the side of the river all the way. the City of Quebec lays below the terrace on which the road is, nor does one see it 'till just entring it. it is divided into upper and lower towns. the upper is on the declivity of a hill and is surrounded by a wall, the part next the river is perpendicular, where are strong batteries of cannon, that intirely comd. the river. the lower Town is built on a very small space between the foot of the rock and the river, the streets of which are very irregular. the principal is very long. warfs are made here for the shipping but the fall of the tide is so consble that it is inconvenient unloading but at high water. the houses here are but indifferent and the streets not very clean or well pav'd; the upper town is much better built, and has two long streets pritty regular. some of the buildings are good; the Govt. house is spacious and from the balcony which seems to hang over the rock there is a fine view. the Jesuits colledge is spacious. it is now turn'd into barracks. the churches and Convents remain as in the French time with all their rights. the Cathedral is a large but rude pile. the fortifications on the hill where also is the Citadel are very extensive and wou'd demand an enormous Garrison but cannot from their situation notwithstanding the expense they have been to the Govt. be strong, as there is a hill at a small distance which if it is not higher, is at least as high, and wou'd offer a most excellent situation for a Battery agt. it; the plains of Abraham are adjoining and are pritty extensive. the part where Genl. Wolf got up does not appear very steep, and has now a very good cart road up it.

next day the 2d. July I rode to the falls of Montmorancy about 9 miles. I pass'd a small river near the Grand Hospital (where is also the order of nuns that take care of the sick) which winds very much, and by the town of Beauport, got to a Villiage adjoining the falls, where I left my horse, and passing the grounds of Genl. Halde-mann where he has built him a pleasant wooden house, descended by a wooden stair case in his Garden to a small Pavillion which is suspended over the bason where the river falls, the height is about 245 feet perpendicular, the breadth <sup>1</sup> feet and take it altogether I think it is the finest fall I ever saw. I afterwards took a road that leads

<sup>1</sup> Blank in MS.

below and rode down to the mouth of the river, where certainly it appears to its greatest advantage; above the falls was a battery, and the aspect of the whole country hereabouts is beautifully romantick. the prospect of the Island of Orleans which is 7 Miles long and very well inhabited which here divides the river St. Laurance not a little heightens the scene.

next day I drove to the Indian Town of Loretta, the country is pritty well cultivated, about a hundred Indians have domesticated themselves here. the Men hunt, the women cultivate the ground, and between them they seem to make out a comfortable way of life. indeed except in dress they differ very little from the Canadians. they have a Church, and an old Jesuit occasionally officiates by whose documents [sic] they have form'd a very fine choir of female voices. the river I mention'd in passing to Montmorancy runs through the viliage and exhibits a romantick cataract of water on which they have a grist mill; next day very early I went in a boat about 7 Miles up the river, to a little river which there falls into the St. Laurance under the name of the Chaudiere; about 2 Miles up this river is a very fine fall broader than that of Montmorancy but not above half its height, nor is it so perfect, as a rock that juts out about the middle divides the sheet of water. the spot about here is as savagely romantick as any I ever beheld, and altogether is as well worth seeing as the other, tho the road to get at it is rather inconvenient; I was told much about the 7 falls of St. Anns, but the difficulty attending the getting there tho' only 7 Leagues from Quebec, hinder'd my attempting it.

next day I rode out on the plains of Abraham, from whence is the most extensive and romantick view one can possibly conceive. I continued my course through a wood and joining the high road to Montreal again had the rich and beautifull view which is exhibited from this terrace. in the Evening I walk'd all round the ramparts which afford a pritty walk, and got up to the Citidel from whence one comds. the whole surrounding country to a great extent.

the people in the Govt. of Quebec dont seem to be very contented. the Seigniorial rights gall the Bourgoisé and make them wish to participate of the same rights as are now establish'd in France. the Seigniors on the contrary are very jealous, and as much as they dare exert their power. the English setlers complain they are deceivd. as they came here in expectation of the English laws prevailing. the Law at present is a strange heterogeneous mixture and by no means permanent. very far are the inhabitants in general from following that Industry, Economy and Sobriety of the American colonies. it struck me the difference was to the full as great as I have in travelling in Europe observ'd it to be, between the free and tyrannick states; the Duties from the fur and grain trade dont half pay the expenses attending the large sallerys of the officers of Govt., and it must strike every disinterested person that it wou'd be a saving to great Britain and a happy-

ness to the people if our Garrisons and civil officers were withdrawn and they left to govern themselves as soon as parliament have settled the division of the provinces, and put them in a way to go through with it, nor shou'd we lose any advantage we at present reap from their trade. on the contrary it wou'd by a liberal treaty be very much augmented.

having seen everything in Canada that was the most worth seeing and wishing to get to Europe time enough to participate of the summer I took my passage in a ship nam'd the Chalmy Capn. Cayley bound to Liverpool, and on Wednesday the 6th. at 12 oClock took our departure from Quebec, which exhibits a fine appearance from point Levey. it being a fine day and a pleasant gale our trip down the river was very intertaining, and we had a most delightfull view of the falls of Montmorancy, the Island of Orleans. the shores on each side seem very well setled appearing in a manner as one continued villiage; towards the close of the day We pass'd several Islands, but they don't appear setled. we put our Pilot on shore on Green Island of which he was Lord, the next day, and on Fryday coasted along Anticosta an Island as yet un-setled. it is about 100 Miles long and is capable of producing every necessary of life.

we meant to go by the streights of Bellisle which much shortens the distance going the Northwds. of New Foundland instead of the Southward, but the winds not suiting we gaind the Banks, so that I lost the opportunity of seeing the Esquimaux, who generally board the vessels passing; after coming on the banks a thick fog surrounded us, and the wind subsiding we caught some fish, when the breeze springing up dispell'd the fog a little and we saw several Ships, Brigs etc fishing. after this we had nothing but thick weather with a fair wind till we were near the coast of Ireland, when it cleard up for a day or two.

the 27th. on Thursday we made Cape Clear early in the morning, but the wind coming due South attended by a thick fog we lost sight of it again. some pilot boats boarded us from whom we got some fish and potatoes, but a strong gale coming on I was unluckily prevented landing as was my intention in Ireland. the weather continued thick with a strong gale all Fryday and next morning we made Holy head coasting along the Welch coast under our courses on acet. of the wind, but the weather clear and fine, and affording a good prospect of the country. we got to Liverpool Dock the 30th. in the evening when I instantly stept on shore, and next morning being Sunday was intertain'd with viewing the great improvements that had been made about the exchange and contiguous streets; I found also that several new Docks had been built since I was here in 1784.







